

## Message Text

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14-11  
ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ITF-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 AID-05 /075 W  
----- 007217

P R 140822Z MAY 75  
FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5171  
INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY SEOUL  
CINCPAC  
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 2641

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SREF, KS, VS, TW  
SUBJECT: KOREANS REMAINING IN SAIGON

BANGKOK FOR SAIGON DCM WOLFGANG LEHMANN

FROM JOSIAH BENNETT

REF: STATE 110668

1. FOLLOWING ARE POINTS BASED ON PERSONAL RECOLLECTION OF  
EVENTS SURROUNDING EVACUATION SAIGON APRIL 29-30 WHICH MAY  
HELP IN ANSWERING PRESS QUERIES ON SUBJECT:

2. EMBASSY SAIGON WAS UNDERSTANDABLY IN NO POSITION TO  
"ASSURE" ALL DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL OF FRIENDLY MISSIONS,  
MUCH LESS ALL FOREIGNERS, THAT WE WOULD EVACUATE THEM FROM  
SAIGON SHOULD AN EMERGENCY SITUATION ARISE MAKING A SUDDEN  
EVACUATION BY HELICOPTER NECESSARY. WE DID HOWEVER TELL  
FRIENDLY EMBASSIES, INCLUDING KOREAN, THAT UNDER SUCH  
CIRCUMSTANCES WE WOULD DO OUR VERY BEST TO HELP THEM REMOVE  
THEIR PERSONNEL SAFELY. FOR SOME WEEKS PRIOR TO APRIL 29  
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WE HAD BEEN URGING FRIENDLY EMBASSIES SEEKING OUR HELP TO  
REDUCE THEIR STAFFS TO MINIMUM NECESSARY FOR ESSENTIAL  
WORK IN ORDER TO HELP OUR PLANNING.

3. IN THE KOREAN CASE WE UNDERTOOK TO DO OUR BEST TO EVACUATE THEIR MINIMUM DIPLOMATIC STAFF OF ABOUT 28 PERSONS. WE DID NOT MAKE ANY UNDERSTANDING WITH REGARD TO THE NON-DIPLOMATIC KOREANS STILL IN SAIGON, ALTHOUGH WE WERE PREPARED WHEN THE TIME CAME TO EVACUATE AS MANY OF THEM AS MIGHT PROVE POSSIBLE.

4. ON APRIL 29 KOREAN EMBASSY PERSONNEL, WARNED BY US, ASSEMBLED AT PRE-ARRANGED ASSEMBLY POINT. BECAUSE OF CONFUSED SITUATION IN SAIGON STREETS WHICH MADE PLANS FOR PICK-UP BY BUS UNRELIABLE AND BECAUSE TAN SON NHUT AIRPORT CLOSED BY HEAVY BOMBARDMENT DURING NIGHT WE ADVISED THEM LATER IN MORNING TO PROCEED TO EMBASSY COMPOUND FOR HELICOPTER EVACUATION. IN DOING SO WE EXPLAINED THAT CROWDS WERE FORMING AT EMBASSY GATES MAKING ENTRANCE TO EMBASSY COMPOUND INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT.

5. EARLY IN THE MORNING OF APRIL 30 AND ONLY A FEW HOURS BEFORE EVACUATION OPERATION WAS TERMINATED WE LEARNED THAT THERE WAS A NUMBER OF KOREANS AWAITING EVACUATION IN COMPOUND BEHIND EMBASSY COMPOUND PROPER. WE URGED THEM TO COME INTO EMBASSY COMPOUND PROPER AT ONCE. HOWEVER, THERE WAS ALREADY A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF PERSONS AWAITING EVACUATION IN THIS AREA AND WHETHER OR NOT THEY COULD ALL BE EVACUATED DEPENDED ON THE NUMBER OF HELICOPTERS STILL AVAILABLE.

6. THRUST OF UPI STORY QUOTED REFTEL QUITE FALSE. EVERY EFFORT WAS MADE IN A VERY CONFUSED AND FAST-MOVING SITUATION TO HELP ALL FRIENDLY DIPLOMATS IN SAIGON TO SAFETY. IF IT HAD BEEN POSSIBLE TO CONTINUE HELILIFT LONGER, ALL PERSONNEL IN EMBASSY COMPOUND, AMONG THEM REMAINING KOREANS, COULD HAVE BEEN EVACUATED. CONCERNING PARA 3 REFTEL, HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE ANY HELICOPTER WITH EMPTY SPACES LEFT EVACUEES IN EMBASSY COMPOUND BEHIND. ON CONTRARY, FROM OUR OBSERVATION MARINES AND HELICOPTERS DID MAGNIFICANT JOB LIFTING MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PERSONS IN MINIMUM TIME (ACCORDING TO OUR ESTIMATE MADE AT TIME SOME 2,600 PERSONS WERE EVACUATED FROM EMBASSY COMPOUND IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS).  
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COMPOUND IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS).  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 26 AUG 1999  
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**To:** STATE INFO MANILA  
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